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TAGS: [ETTC](#) [EFIN](#) [UNSC](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KTFN](#) [PTER](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: MAKING TALIBAN SANCTIONS RELEVANT

REF: A. 2006 KABUL 1341
[1](#)B. 2006 KABUL 1545

Classified By: Acting Permanent Representative,
Ambassador Alejandro Wolff, for Reasons 1.4 (B and D)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action cable. Please see paragraph 10.

[1](#)2. (C) SUMMARY: This cable provides a status report on implementation of UNSCR 1735, a resolution drafted by the USG which calls for updating the Taliban sanctions list to enhance its utility as a relevant and potent tool to combat the current upsurge of Taliban violence in Afghanistan. The approach to clean up the Taliban list is three-pronged: 1) delisting (removing from under sanctions) former Taliban who have successfully completed the reconciliation program or who are otherwise no longer associated with the Taliban; 2) sanctioning currently active members of the Taliban; and 3) updating the biographic information on those names which remain on the list in order to help States better enforce the sanctions. UKUN, the French Mission, and the Afghanistan Mission strongly support this effort. Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) to Afghanistan Tom Koenigs has also urged updating the Taliban sanctions list during his recent briefings to the Security Council and in private meetings with USUN, and is expected to reiterate this view during the next Security Council meeting on UNAMA scheduled for March 20. The Russian Mission agrees with the general principle of improving or adding to the list, but is reluctant to approve any delistings. Para 10 contains USUN recommendations on how to energize implementation of UNSCR [1](#)1735. END SUMMARY.

BACKGROUND

[1](#)3. (C) UN Security Council resolution 1735 (2006) instructs the 1267 (al-Qaida/Taliban) Sanctions Committee to clean up the Taliban side of the sanctions list, which has been largely untouched since 2003. There are 142 Taliban individuals and one Taliban entity currently on the sanctions list. All of these designations were submitted by the UK, France, and Russia in 2001 and many were updated with additional information and corrections in 2003. While the Committee has worked intensively on the al-Qaida side of the sanctions list, there has been little action on the Taliban list since 2003.

[1](#)4. (C) Resolution 1735 (2006) lays out three distinct actions to improve the list: delist former Taliban, sanction new Taliban members, and update the biographic information for those individuals who remain on the sanctions list.

DELISTING

15. (C) The Afghan government requested that a total of 20 individuals be removed from the sanctions list in three separate letters to the 1267 Committee in November 2005 and January 2006. The U.S. lifted its hold (opposition) on the request to delist one of those individuals, Uruzgan Governor Abdul Hakim Monib, in April 2006 (ref A). We then lifted our hold on delisting an additional 12 of the names on November 122. However, all UNSC sanctions committees work on the basis of consensus, and because Russia, the UK, and France maintain their holds on some or all of the 20 names requested by Afghanistan, the U.S. action did not lead to any immediate change of status for any of the individuals in question.

16. (C) In addition to the Afghan delisting request, the French Mission informed USUN on March 1 that Paris is examining the original list of Taliban, which it submitted for sanctioning in 2001, to determine if any of those individuals can be taken off the list. As soon as Paris concludes its internal review, the French will share with us ideas for additional Taliban delisting. According to UKUN, London has not begun a similar review process.

LISTING

17. (C) Afghan PermRep Dr. Zahir Tanin requested a meeting with USUN on Feb 21 and conveyed that his government is keen to help improve the Taliban sanctions list, including by adding new names. Ambassador Tanin relayed a recent conversation he had with 1267 Committee Chairman, Belgian PermRep Verbeke, in which the Belgian Ambassador encouraged Afghanistan to submit additional Taliban individuals for sanctioning as part of an overall effort to update the list. Tanin will press his capital to generate a target list and pledged to work with USUN as soon as he receives feedback from Kabul. In addition, Tanin expressed hope that by informally linking an eventual designation request with Afghanistan's previous delisting requests on hold, he may convince the Russians to allow some delistings to move ahead.

UPDATING INFORMATION

18. (C) Concerning additional biographic data for individuals currently on the sanctions list, the 1267 Committee's Monitoring Team trip to Kabul planned for April will be a good opportunity to gather new information to improve the accuracy of the list.

COMMENT

19. (C) Updating the Taliban part of the al-Qaida/Taliban sanctions list will send a strong signal that the Security Council is committed to preserving the accuracy and relevance of the sanctions list, a message that facilitates our ability to pursue sanctions against other bad actors. Such action will also underscore the Council's continued belief that sanctions are an important tool in the effort to address Taliban violence in Afghanistan. In addition, achieving Council consensus to delist former Taliban will support the Afghan government and its reconciliation program. Convincing the Russians to proceed with all three facets of the action plan will be difficult. The Russian Mission has made clear to USUN that current instructions from Moscow are to oppose all Taliban delisting. However, linking the possibility of new Taliban additions to the sanctions list with delisting does present an opportunity to change the Russian position, a point USUN conveyed to Ambassador Tanin. Additionally, strong support and good cooperation from SRSG Koenigs and UNAMA, the UK, France, and Afghanistan will help as we try to advance this process.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION

¶10. (C) USUN has spoken to the 1267 Committee Chairman (Belgium), France, the UK, Russia, and Afghanistan about cleaning up the Taliban list. We propose the following sequence of actions in order to advance the process:

¶A. Request Embassy Kabul to verify with Afghan authorities that the original 20 names for delisting are still valid; ask if the GOA has additional requests for delisting; and urge Kabul to generate a list of new names for Taliban sanctions.

¶B. Request Embassies London and Paris to urge the UK and France to scrub thoroughly their original Taliban designation requests from 2001 to see if any names France and the UK proposed then qualify now for delisting.

¶C. Once the government of Afghanistan responds to our request to update its listing/delisting requests, USG to seek P-3 agreement on a set of names for listing and for delisting.

¶D. In coordination with the P-3 and the government of Afghanistan, approach Russia with a balanced plan both to list and to delist, securing Russian agreement through an informal linkage between the two actions.

¶E. Formal submission of names to the 1267 Committee.
WOLFF